

City of Harrington
MINUTES
City Council Workshop
February 26, 2014

A workshop with the Harrington City Council was held at Harrington City Hall, 106 Dorman Street, on February 26, 2014 and was attended by the following: Mayor Anthony R. Moyer; Council Member Duane E. Bivans; Council Member Fonda Coleman; Council Member Amy Minner; Council Member Charles W. Porter; Council Member Kenneth Stubbs; William Pepper, City Solicitor; Teresa Tieman, City Manager; and Kelly Blanchies, Clerk of Council.

Also present: Rebecca Greene and Marie Cunningham.

Vice Mayor Cheryl Lahman entered the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Mayor Moyer called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Water and sewer rate study

The City Manager stated that the proposed wastewater rate has been adjusted to an eighty dollar (\$80) capacity charge and eight dollars and ten cents (\$8.10) for the usage charge. The average resident with a home assessed at fifty-nine thousand dollars (\$59,000) would see an overall decrease between the water, sewer, and tax bills. The effect on ratepayers depends on the assessed value of the property and actual usage.

Council Member Minner asked about the projected surplus of the new sewer rates. The City Manager replied that it is projected at ten thousand eight hundred dollars (\$10,800) but a lot can change that amount.

Mayor Moyer asked when the City would know if Kent County is raising their rates. The City Manager replied that there will be no increase next year, and the City would receive notice of any rate change in advance.

Mayor Moyer asked about grease traps. The City Manager replied that the City is inspecting them.

The City Manager stated that grant funding is being sought to correct the issue of brown water.

Mayor Moyer asked about using impact fees to pay for increased pipe sizes. The City Manager stated that the additional cost between replacing the existing pipe and upgrading the size of pipe can be paid with impact fees.

Council Member Minner asked about lawn meters. The City Manager replied that they are allowed, and it costs about three hundred dollars (\$300) for a meter.

Council Member Bivans stated that he is concerned about people understanding how much they will be paying and why they have to pay. Mayor Moyer stated that it would be helpful to be able to look up each property's usage and assessment.

Council Member Porter stated that the City saved about fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) because the City Manager did the rate study instead of hiring a consultant.

Council Member Minner stated that public input is needed. Mayor Moyer stated that the City Council should go to the public hearings about the rates.

Council Member Porter left the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Public Comments

Marie Cunningham stated that consistent terminology should be used or it will be confusing and asked how the rates were related to the failed referendum. Mayor Moyer stated that they are two separate issues, because the referendum was for capital improvements, and the rates are to pay for current costs. Ms. Cunningham stated that conservation should be emphasized and that quality of life and property values will increase with improvements.

Rebecca Greene stated that the rates have to increase and prefers an increase now rather than costing more later.

Council Member Bivans stated that the City needs to have a plan for the brown water.

Ms. Cunningham asked about lead joints. Council Member Stubbs stated that lead joints leak often but have an undetectable impact on water quality.

There being no further business, the City Council Workshop adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Blanchies
Clerk of Council

Note: Minutes typed from notes. No recording available.